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# Challenges in a Large Metropolitan Area New York City and Bed Bugs

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# Some Context Influencing New York City's Response

- High population density and diverse cultures
- We are a city of renters: 2 out of 3 apartments in NYC are rental, and >80% of NYC lives in multi-unit dwellings
  - Landlord-tenant relationships can challenge effective responses to bed bug
  - Resource constraints
- Specialized city agencies, public authorities

# Facilitating Effective Control

- Policy Analysis and Development
- Regulations and Compliance
- Research and Surveillance
- Outreach and Education
- Funding

# Policy Analysis and Development

- Bed Bug Advisory Board
  - City Council passed and Mayor signed into law in March 2009
  - Inter-agency, with external experts and advocates
  - Report issued in April 2010 with recommendations on:
    - Education, Awareness and Early Detection
    - Treatment and Remediation
    - Monitoring and Policy
- Meeting with all agencies
  - Needs and current resources
  - Areas of cooperation

# Regulations and Compliance

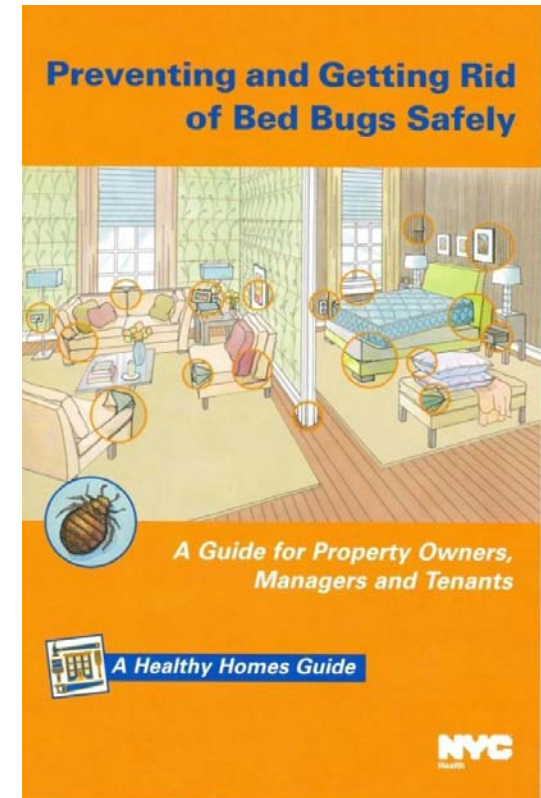
- Managing bed bugs within framework of existing regulations
  - Housing Maintenance Code
  - Health Code (Article 151)
- New regulations
  - Bed Bug Disclosure Act (NY State)
  - Mattress Disposal Rule (NY City)
- Regulatory compliance
- Additional tools for inspecting and tracking compliance

# Research and Surveillance

- Monitoring use of pesticides through state and Local Law 37 data and adverse effects through data from NYC Poison Control Center
- NYC's Community Health Survey (2009) found 6.7% of adults reported bed bugs in their homes in the past 12 months
  - *During the last 12 months have you had a problem with bed bugs in your home that required an exterminator?*
  - Disparate prevalence by income and neighborhood

# Outreach and Education

- Local Agencies
  - Staff education and training
  - Bed Bug Identification Service
  - Training for inspectors and pest management professionals
- General public
  - Over 200,000 fact sheets distributed
  - Bed bug brochure (English, Spanish, Chinese, Russian, Korean, Haitian Creole and Italian)
    - Adopted and used by other municipalities
    - Part of enforcement efforts
    - Housing and Preservation e-Learning course
    - Enhanced web site





# In Development

- Institutional guidelines for effective discovery and management. Examples:
  - Health care settings
  - Office buildings
  - Retail establishments
  - Used clothing/furniture stores and charities
- Self-remediation recommendations
- Minimum recommended pest control practices
- Model contracts with pest management firms

# Lessons Learned

- Preventing and controlling bed bugs require cooperation from all stakeholders
- Integrated Pest Management is the only valid approach
- Outreach and education must be major components for any wide scale strategy
- The public learning curve is steep; many myths remain and are reinforced by sensationalist media coverage
- Health departments should acknowledge health concerns while reinforcing fact that bed bugs do not transmit disease

# The Limits of Local Actions to Control Bed Bugs

- Lack of regulatory authority – preemption by federal and state pesticide regulations
  - Pesticide use and mandating IPM
  - False and exaggerated product claims
  - Continued availability and promotion of hazardous consumer products ineffective against bed bugs
  - Wide variation in quality of pest control services
- A City's ability to influence pest control practice is generally limited to a small universe of purchasers of services, rather than providers
  - Permitted entities, such as child care institutions, restaurants
  - Those receiving violations for the presence of bed bugs
- Bed bugs are overwhelming public and private pest control budgets